

It's time to put the public interest first and not the financial interests of giant cable companies who want to grow larger. Comcast & Time Warner's proposed purchase of Adelphia Cable will allow two companies to control almost 50% of the national cable market - this is a clear violation of horizontal ownership rules that the FCC has a responsibility to re-establish.

Americans spoke loud and clear during the media ownership debate and the FCC listened. We all know that the concentration of media ownership and control is a disaster for Democracy and the public interest - the same holds true for the concentration of cable ownership.

I am tired of seeing huge increases in my cable bills. In fact, since the 1996 Telecommunications Act, Americans have seen rates jump an average of 59%! This sale will do nothing to improve service or rates. I am very alarmed that Comcast, who has terrible customer service ratings, will be allowed to become even larger when they don't provide decent services to their current customers.

I am deeply concerned about those Americans who can't afford to pay at all - making cable modem service

out of reach. Rural and low income Americans are completely ignored in a time when access to the Internet has become as important as access to electricity or other basic services.

I am also concerned about the fact that companies like Comcast control not only the delivery systems but also much of the content. This effectively shuts out independent channels and diversity of thought and opinion.

Finally, the larger these companies get, the less responsive they are to local needs and communities. They choose to ignore local franchise agreements and have little public accountability. We must force these companies to support community media centers and public access - in many communities these channels are the only source of independent news and information.

We need the FCC to stand up and say that flagrant disregard for the public interest in lieu of the corporate bottom line will not fly - especially when these companies use OUR public rights of way free of charge to pile up huge profits.

